

Sketch

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Sloppy Joes

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SLOPPY JOHNS

By: Lauren Mallott

Ingredients

- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 can condensed tomato soup
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 2 years of marriage, no children, no pets
- 1 cheating husband, just the heart
- 1 loft railing, poorly built
- 1 backstabbing sister
- Salt, pepper, and garlic powder to taste

Instructions

1. Invite your sister over for dinner on Saturday night. Promise her a home cooked meal and catching up. When she sounds reluctant, convince her by saying that you missed her and that you two haven't spoken in a while.
2. Ignore your husband, John, when he complains about not wanting people over. Explain to him that you haven't seen Eliza in a long time, and it would be good for him to spend some time with his sister-in-law. Roll your eyes when he stomps off.
3. Purchase groceries to make lasagna on Friday. Decide to wait and prep the meal the morning of. It would take up more of your Saturday, but at least your Friday night will belong to you.

4. Get a phone call from John as you're making dinner on Friday. Argue with him for several minutes about him working late again. Point out that you haven't had sex in weeks, and ask him to blow off work and come home to you. Slam the phone down on the table when he hangs up on you.
5. Eat dinner alone again and pour yourself glasses of wine until the argument is forgotten. Fall asleep before John gets home.
6. On Saturday, sleep in late to fight your hangover, then begin to prepare for Eliza. Clean the living room, check the toilet paper level in the main bathroom, begin to prepare the lasagna. Yell down the hall several times to John. Ask him to come and help you get ready for dinner.
7. While John is in the shower, get annoyed at the constant pinging coming from his cell phone on the island. Finally decide to see who is texting him so many times in a row. Wish you hadn't.
8. Scroll through each text and nude photo and wipe your eyes when they start to blur with tears.
9. When John comes into the kitchen and asks you what you want him to do, tell him you want him to explain himself. Get angrier when he gets confused.
10. Throw his phone at the wall near his head and scream at him for fucking your sister. Laugh when he tells you that he doesn't know what you're talking about. Laugh harder when he calls you crazy.
11. Demand to know how long he has been sleeping with Eliza. Roll your eyes when he insists that he isn't. Tell him you read the text messages.

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12. Laugh once more when he changes his tune and tries to make the argument about you going through his phone. Tell him he lost the rights to privacy when he ruined your marriage.
13. When he tries to reach for you, stomp out of the room and open the hall closet. Shove a suitcase in his arms and tell him he has an hour to get out. Tell him you don't want to see him or your sister again.
14. Go back to working on dinner. Refuse to talk to John as he pleads with you to listen to him. Tell him to get the fuck out.
15. When he grabs your arm, wrench it away again and push him--not too roughly, but hard enough to make him take a few steps back. Dodge his hand when he reaches for you again.
16. Step back in shock when he hits you. Grab your face with your hand and tell him he's hurting you as he crushes your arm in his grip. Begin to cry when he tells you to shut up and calls you a crazy bitch. Get scared when his face turns red and start to back up, pulling John with you. Look over your shoulder to see how far you are from the loft railing.
17. Ask him to let go of you, and sidestep quickly, yanking your arm out of his hand. When he reaches for you again, shove him as hard as you can. Wince as he smashes through he flimsy wooden railing and falls to the main level in a crash and crumple of bones breaking.
18. Stare down blankly at your husband lying motionless on the marble floor below, his neck at an odd angle. Jump when the oven's preheat timer goes off.

19. Suddenly remember your sister and look at the clock. You have three hours until she gets here, and no idea where to begin dealing with this mess. Decide that you need to get John out of the house.
20. Try to drag your husband towards the garden door and curse when you can't move him. Pull the coffee table off of the area rug and roll John on top of the red and gold carpet. Then, pull on the rug and smile when the body slides with ease.
21. Pull John out into the garden and over to the shed. Stand there for a moment and think about what to do with him. Look over to his workbench and suddenly decide that John will be present at this dinner, whether he likes it or not.
22. Roll John back off of the rug and onto the cement floor. Run the rug back inside so that it doesn't get ruined, then go back to the shed and pick up John's reciprocating saw.
23. Turn the saw on and kneel over John. Hesitate for only a moment before pushing the saw down onto the top of his sternum.
24. Saw through the bone carefully so as to not damage the organs underneath. When you've opened up his chest enough, reach in and pull out his heart. Use the saw to cut the heart loose from the rest of the body, then sit back for a moment to breathe, noticing for the first time the blood smeared on your shirt and jeans.
25. Bring the heart inside and set it in a bowl before going to your room to change. Once your clothes are stashed in the back of your closet, go back to the kitchen and root around for a new recipe. Settle on your mother's sloppy joe recipe, as it was Eliza's favorite when you were young.

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26. Shove the lasagna in the fridge for later, and place the heart on a cutting board. Slice the lower half into very small pieces, and toss them in a pan alongside the onion and celery. Sauté until the onions turn soft and the meat browns.
27. Add ketchup, tomato soup, salt, pepper, and garlic to the pan and mix thoroughly. Dig hamburger buns out of the pantry and spoon mixture onto two sandwiches. Bring the plate down to the living room along with a tray of fruit. Wait for your sister to arrive.
28. When she rings the doorbell, invite her in with a smile and a hug. Hand her the plate of sloppy Johns, and when she asks why you're not eating, tell her you've recently gone vegan and start picking at the fruit tray.
29. Laugh when she tells you a story, and nod when she asks if John is at work. Ask her how her dogs are and whether or not she's still talking to her ex. Smile when she asks what kind of meat is in the sandwich.
30. Tell her it's John. Laugh when she thinks you're joking. Tell her you know about their affair, and that, since John had given a part of his heart to her, you decided to give her the rest.
31. Calmly pull out your laptop while she screams and runs from the room. As she vomits and cries in the bathroom, type into the search bar "maximum sentence for corpse desecration".

Lauren Mallott is a senior in the English department at Iowa State University. She has been writing for 10 years now, and this is her first publication. She enjoys reading, traveling abroad, and petting cats. Lauren hopes to continue writing and publishing in the years to come, and she would like to thank her best friend, Heather, for proofreading all of her stories throughout the years.